

Alrick Hale,
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I am opposed to SB433 based on the following:

5 years ago the River Pit in Kalispell started a firestorm in Permitting and Operations of Gravel Mines that continues today. I have worked hard with neighborhood groups, County Gravel Committees, and the DEQ to come up with local solutions to the issues that arose regarding Gravel Permitting in our area.

I do not believe that we as an industry should ask for legislation that allows the DEQ to subjectively decide which permit applications will get greater scrutiny based upon the comments received from the public.

If environmental issues exist, all permit applications need to be addressed the same rules. In my opinion, this legislation could place the commercial operators in this state at a disadvantage when applying for a permit. The neighbors would not agree to a less stringent permitting process simply because the pit life is projected to be 5 years or less.

As Knife River, we believe in a "Good Neighbor Policy" and this is not it.

To conclude:

We as an industry have supported changes in the Open Cut Legislation for the past couple of Sessions and that Legislation has not fixed the problem. My recommendation is that we do not add more Legislation that will not solve the problem. The DEQ simply needs our support to help improve the system. (More Staff to process Applications)